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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Sanitation Summit Highlights USAID-supported Wastewater Treatment Facility in Muntinlupa**

**MUNTINLUPA CITY, METRO MANILA** - Twelve Filipinos die everyday as a result of exposure to unsanitary wastewater. According to the World Bank, over 90 percent of all sewage generated in the Philippines is not treated, leading to fatal water-borne diseases and economic losses estimated at P67 billion per year. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is working with municipal governments in a number of locations across the Philippines to reduce the significant health and economic costs of polluted water.

At the Philippine Sanitation Summit on July 5-6 at the Heritage Hotel in Pasay City, Muntinlupa City presented its USAID-supported Public Market Wastewater Treatment Facility as a successful model of wastewater treatment for other local governments to replicate. The facility operates 24 hours a day, recycling dirty water discharged from the public market into clean water for safe use by local residents. USAID provided technical and design assistance for the construction of the facility, the country's first low-cost wastewater treatment facility. Muntinlupa City financed the facility's construction.

USAID's Local Initiatives for Affordable Wastewater Treatment (LINAW) Project operates in seven cities, including Muntinlupa, to assist local government units to implement the Clean Water Act (R.A. 8749). The other cities scheduled to build their own facilities with USAID assistance are Calbayog, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Malaybalay, Muntinlupa, Naga, and San Fernando, La Union. "USAID's support to these cities and to the Philippine Sanitation Summit is part of its commitment to help foster improved sanitation in Asia, which will have far reaching benefits on people's quality of life, health, the economy and the environment," says Ms Lisa Kircher Lumbao, USAID consultant.



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The Philippine Sanitation Summit on July 5-6, organized by the Department of Health and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, addressed a range of sanitation-related problems. National policy and decision makers, local and international water and sanitation experts, local government officials, and representatives of civil society and media discussed establishing commitments between national agencies and local government units for investments in sanitation and wastewater management programs. Activities at the Summit included panel discussions on the state of sanitation in the Philippines, implementation of the Clean Water Act of 2004, presentation of case studies and success stories of local governments, and planning sessions.

Summit participants signed the Manila Declaration on the Advancement of Sustainable Sanitation and Wastewater Management calling for the activation of a high-level sanitation working group within the national government. The declaration also seeks financing for the Clean Water Act, which mandates households and establishments to connect to sewerage systems in urban areas and directs national and local governments to implement sewerage/septage management programs within five years.

USAID is assisting cities in five other Asian countries to develop affordable systems to treat wastewater from public facilities and households. Representatives from Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam attended the Sanitation Summit to share their experiences and discuss effective strategies. Following the summit, USAID will bring the foreign delegates to Muntinlupa so they can witness firsthand the wastewater treatment facility's benefits to the city. The group will also visit Dumaguete City to learn about the development of a city-wide program to properly manage septic tanks. The foreign delegates will hold discussions with their Filipino counterparts to exchange best practices and develop regional linkages.



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USAID is one of several international partners supporting the Philippine Sanitation Summit. Other international partners include the World Bank, Australian Agency for International Development, German Technical Cooperation Agency, World Health Organization, Plan International, and Streams of Knowledge. Local institutions supporting the summit are the Philippine Ecological Sanitation Network, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, Manila Water, Maynilad Water, and the Philippine Charity and Sweepstakes Office.

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